

M-G-M's "Fury" Held Over For 3rd Week, Capitol, N.Y.

CANADIAN MOVING PICTURE DIGEST

Vol. 28, No. 9

TORONTO 2, CANADA

June 20th, 1936

**GET READY FOR THE
MOST THRILLING
BOOK OF YOUR
LIFETIME!**

Next week we will have ready a book which we believe is the most important (*not to mention the most informative and attractive*) piece of literature ever printed since this business began.



(please turn to next page)

PUBLISHED BY
CANADIAN MOVING PICTURE DIGEST COMPANY LIMITED
259 SPADINA AVENUE, TORONTO 2

THIS BOOK gives you frankly and informally the whole picture of what Metro-Goldwyn Mayer will represent to theatre box-offices in the coming season 1936-1937.

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"LEO'S CANDID CAMERA BOOK" (118 thrilling pages, profusely illustrated with informal candid pictures of the vast galaxy of M-G-M stars and players). It tells you everything you would want to know about the big budget plans of M-G-M next season. You have heard in the trade and you may have already seen in some trade papers early reports of what M-G-M is doing in '36-'37. As announced M-G-M is making more big budget productions than have ever been issued either by ourselves or any other company in one season.

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RAY LEWIS

Editor and Publisher

THE LITTLE PAPER WITH THE BIG IDEAS

"Easy to Digest"

Vol. 28, No. 9

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PERCENTAGE FOR ENGLAND



ONE of the interesting angles of the British Film Industry was the percentage angle on pictures, with which your Editor grew familiar while in England.

It was not unusual for an exhibitor to pay as much as sixty per cent of his box office receipts for his film, and still make money. Exhibitors informed us that to pay twenty-five per cent was considered a "break". Houses of 700 seats, in what might be termed small towns, payed as much as thirty-three per cent of receipts. Fifty per cent in "good spots" was an average.

The system of watching rentals is almost perfect because of exhibitors' cooperation, and incidentally the "checking system" as introduced, is practically infallible in England. However, this "checking system" is only possible because the territory can be so easily covered, whereas the great distances in Canada would make percentages too expensive for operation through such a "checking system".

Now we learn that there are to be "no more flat rentals in England"; that the percentage system will be generally introduced. Under this system, all pictures will have to be good, to make any money for the producer-distributor, for he will be gambling with the exhibitor, just as the showman in the old days of travelling shows.

Distributors in Canada have received fifteen per cent in some of their percentage spots, but we have not heard any distributors cheer for this percentage, although in some key houses the fifteen per cent slides up to twenty-five, over a certain intake. With or without this intake, there is no cheering.

Downtown houses are selected for the percentages in Canada, but it is not always the downtown house which gives the circuit or the distributors their money, save that the downtown houses still are considered the "show windows" of this business, and in the money or "in the red", IT PAYS TO ADVERTISE.

"LITTLE LORD FAUNTLEROY" GETS LEAGUE'S GOLD MEDAL

WHATEVER may be said for or against the League of Nations, their paralysis in respect to restraining Japan, Germany or Italy by the threat of sanctions, their consideration at the present time of eliminating sanctions and increasing armaments, we of the Show Business feel that the bestowal of a gold medal by the League on the producer of "Little Lord Fauntleroy", Mr. David O. Selznick, is one with which we are in perfect accord.

Our congratulations to Mr. Selznick, United Artists, Freddie Bartholomew, Dolores Costello Barrymore, the excellent cast of players, cameramen and the author of the adaptation, who combined to secure this League of Nations 1936 award.

Special showings of "Little Lord Fauntleroy" will be sponsored by the League in Geneva, Paris and other European capitals.

The award came through the unanimous vote of the fifty-two member nations of the League's committee for the propagation of motion pictures.



RAY



RAY LEWIS

PRESENTS

AUGUSTUS BRIDLE, in the Toronto Daily Star of June 13th, has a prominent article headed "Saloons in Film of C.P.R. Censured by Movie Editor".

I am the Movie Editor to which Mr. Bridle refers. I admit it, and whether I say yea or nay, Mr. Bridle leaves me no room for evasion, for his sub-heading reads "Ray Lewis Wants Romance of Railway Building to be respectable". Well, well, let me see what gave my good friend Mr. Bridle this "respectable" idea regarding we three, "Romance", "C.P.R." and "Ray Lewis". We all have an "R" prominently placed in our names, and so has "respectable". Perhaps that's the answer to this "respectable" question which Roly Young started, for doesn't "Roly" also start off with an "R", and didn't Roly talk about the G-B "saloons" and "spittoons" in his article in the Mail & Empire of June 5th; so merrily we Roly Young.

Thanks for the space you gave me, Mr. Bridle, nearly a column, in which you tried to disagree with me, only to end by a perfect agreement in the last section of your column, headed "Shouldn't Overplay Saloons".

We quote you, "The Business of the scenario writer is to put the saloon in. The great job of the wise director — if Gaumont-British has such a person (It has, Mr. Bridle, several of them. Ed.) — is to see that Alan Sullivan's saloons are not overplayed".

If you will again read Ray Presents, in the issue of June 6th, you will note that this is the very attitude which I have taken in respect to the saloons as publicized by G-B for their forthcoming production "The Great Barrier". Permit me to quote my own Ray Presents, "There may have been 'saloons' during the building of the C.P.R., but such institutions are only a splash of red, in a history ablaze with brilliant colour. And incidentally, being a Canadian may I suggest to the producers of this history of the C.P.R. that Canadians will not enjoy the idea of a British picture, made in Canada or in England, which EMPHASIZES this 'saloon' angle. Believe it or not, we have our 'fling', but it's in the nature of a 'Highland fling'; we let ourselves go, but we aim to be respectable."

NOW, will you, my gentle readers, tell me what is the difference in the advice of Mr. Bridle, who writes, "shouldn't OVERPLAY saloons" and that of Ray Lewis who writes not to EMPHASIZE them.

This may be a "fair example of moralizing hokum", as you, Mr. Bridle, say, but you are as guilty as I am,

and both of us, no more guilty than the rest of the world of moralizers.

There is just a "teeney weeney" difference between you and me, insofar as our policies go. I like to keep the Industry out of trouble, warn or advise it out of danger, so that when your turn comes to criticize the picture in the press, this "saloon angle" will not inspire the editorial policy of your newspaper to advise you "to slay the picture with your pen on the saloon set-up."

No one expects G-B to make a picture showing the building of the C.P.R. as a pastoral, studded with shepherdesses to whom shepherds are reciting Virgil, or with nothing more exciting in this tale than the loss of the sheep of little Bo-Peep, which return with their tails behind them.

I SAW "The Covered Wagon", and "Cimarron" and "The Iron Horse"; pictures which were of a similar epic nature as this C.P.R. romance should be, and the publicity for these did not play up the "saloons" in these pictures. There was too much "red meat" bigness and greatness in the foundation of these historical epics of the screen, just as there is in the history of the C.P.R., not to hit the high-spots for press material.

When "Carry On Sergeant" was being made in Canada under Bruce Bairnsfather's direction, a big name, I had my misgivings, but remained silent until it was too late. I am keenly interested to see G-B make a big and successful picture of "The Great Barrier", but since the presentation of a picture is as important as its quality, I do not wish to see G-B make a mistake at the very beginning of its publicity, for even the name of a bishop's son as author of the story, will not save it from the "kick-back" of "saloon publicity". Talk of the pioneers, the track-makers, who opened up the country and laid their tracks at a time when modern machinery was not in existence to lighten the load, or spare the back, doubled under the pack!

IT'S a big Idea. It was a great Adventure! Talk Big!! Try and make a British picture of a Canadian epic, and avoid trying to imitate an American adaptation of a Jack London story.

As for "Klondike Annie's", the best "She" in the picture from my viewpoint, is the "Engine"; what a "beloved She", She must have been when She puffed out her steam for the first time, making the Canadian Pacific Railway, a world famous name.

And now to return to "Things To Come", the H. G. Wells-Korda Production. I saw nothing "ambiguous" in my comments in regard to
(Continued on page 5)

RKO Lists 26 Star Films in 54 Features Next Season

(Continued from page 4)

this picture, as mentioned in the same column, by the same writer in the Toronto Daily Star. I said of "Things To Come", in Ray Presents of June 6th, "It is difficult to place 'Things To Come' in comparison with other pictures, certainly it is a daring venture, and takes first place in that line-up of big pictures with an educational appeal . . . I cannot call this picture 'box-office' in the accepted sense of the word, and yet it may build better than we know. This happy-go-lucky public of ours may be fascinated by the immensity of 'Things To Come', and the mechanical inventiveness of its conception."

WHAT'S "ambiguous" about such comment, and why should I be alarmed at such a film as "Things To Come"? Do tell me, Mr. Bridle, and, incidentally, are you not a little hard on H. G. Wells, of whom you write in another column, "Both Wells and O'Neill (Eugene O'Neill) should be sent to a rest home for life, with ice-packs on their heads, and no pens. The world does not need books and films such as these, Wells and O'Neill think they need the money that millions will spend to read their books and see their films, which, if any reader wants more misery in his mind, is entirely up to the reader".

Certainly there is nothing ambiguous about your dislike, Mr. Bridle, for "Things To Come", and H. G. Wells, its author.

I like H. G. Wells. I think he is one of England's greatest writers. He is a charming man, whom I had the pleasure of meeting, while on my last visit to England. He is friendly, and possesses a keen sense of humour, he is among the safest of English writers to visit foreign countries, for being an Englishman, and a great one, does not get in his way, or in the way of the foreign countries he visits, they generally like "his way".

He paid me the compliment of thanking me for an idea I gave him concerning the adaptation for the screen, of "Mr. Britling Sees It Through", and said, "If I go through with the idea, I will dedicate the film to Ray Lewis as the originator of the idea."

IF all the ideas I have handed out were treated in the same way, there would be plenty of dedications, but then all the ideas which I have given out promiscuously, and through which men have made millions of dollars, have not been given out to men such as H. G. Wells, with an imagination which could give birth to a film such as "Things To Come". Remember what he said to the English writer at the Pen Club, London, "Oh, Mr. Wells, you won't like California, I was there for ten days, and it rained every day." Mr. Wells replied, "The Californians are so hospitable, that that knowing you were English, they were endeavouring to give you a bit of English climate", — and lest anyone else believes I am "ambiguous" in my praise of Well's "Things To Come", quote me as saying, "Well-done, Wells".

20th Century-Fox, which has a contract with the Quintuplets, may be interested to know that Mrs. Oliva Dionne is again in the press. There is **ANOTHER BABY EXPECTED** — "The Blessed Event", however, is being kept a secret.

When the Quintuplets came along, their mother said that it was the work of "The Blessed God", but anyone looking at Oliva, their

father, could plainly see that he had something to do with it.

The Dionnes have had twelve children during their eleven years of marriage; five children and the Quintuplets are members of the Dionne family, the other baby died.

The present coming of a new baby is being surrounded with secrecy. Mr. Dionne will allow no one to talk to the "expectant mother" without a permit; perhaps he expects more quintuplets, and this time intends to remain in control! Meanwhile, are we excited in Canada! Front page stuff, so you can imagine.

I AM sorry to learn of the passing of Gilbert Keith Chesterton, who always reminded me of Dr. Samuel Johnson. G. K. Chesterton was a distinguished critic and author of world fame. He died following a heart attack at his Buckinghamshire country home, "Top Meadow". He was 62.

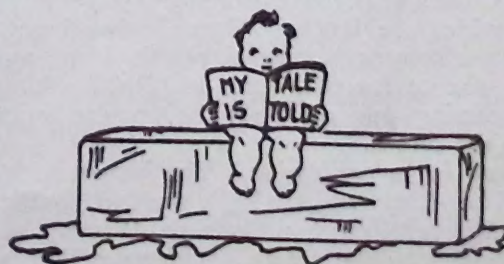
"G. K.", a converted Catholic, took his adopted religion most seriously and vigorously, writing many articles in its defense. He had two pronounced dislikes, Bernard Shaw, on whom he wrote a book, and Hollywood, of which he said, "it was born in the last swinish leavings of modern sentimentalism, mixed with skepticism".

Another death which has saddened me is the death of Nathan Burkan, a brilliant man, 57 at his passing. Too young, too useful, too important to have so soon become a name.

And now I add the name of Henry B. Walthall, who passed away at the age of 55. The "little colonel" of "The Birth of a Nation" fame — I saw him during my visit to Hollywood last year — a white-haired gentleman, a picturesque character in our industry. Are we growing old who are still among the living, or do those among us who pass away, die in their young years? So many have gone!

AMONG all the glowing tributes to "improved pictures" by churches and organizations all over the world, representative leaders, men and women of letters and distinction, I read that the Executive Council of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America deplores the "distinctly low grade" of many motion pictures. I am not going to present the "objectionable features" mentioned, save, that in the list mentioned, we read, "nineteen feature pictures during the last four years have been classified as pro-war . . . news-reels may be justly charged with propaganda for war and armaments".

A recent letter of commendation from the Executive Board of the Women's League of the United Synagogue of America, which met in conference at Washington, was directed to the Motion Picture Council, complimenting the Council for the production of **BETTER PICTURES**. Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt was guest speaker for the Women's League, which, by the way, represents 310 affiliated women's sisterhoods of synagogues all over the world, and with a membership of 90,000 women!



United Amusement Corp. of Montreal Buys Warner's Entire Feature Output and Shorts for 1936-1937

Reviews and Previews

Imperial Theatre - Manager, Tom Daley.

"THE KING STEPS OUT"

Columbia

Running Time—86 Minutes



"Jay L."

WHEN a man bites a dog that's supposed to be news, and when your reviewer and your Editor disagree on a picture that's also news, for nine times out of ten we see things in just about the same light. However, your Editor saw "The King Steps Out", and was disappointed in it, whereas your reviewer saw it and enjoyed it.

I think the Editor made the mistake of taking "The King Steps Out" too seriously, and it is not a picture to be taken seriously for even a minute; it is a musical-comedy, with great emphasis on the comedy element, or better still it could be described as a musico-farce, for the greater part of its comedy is poking fun at European royalty and their conventions and customs.

Grace Moore plays the role of Cissy, one of the daughters of the democratic Duke of Bavaria. When her sister Helena, is betrothed against her will to her cousin the Emperor Francis Joseph of Austria, Cissy determines to break up the engagement, so that Helena can marry the young officer whom she loves. Masquerading as a dressmaker, Cissy meets the Emperor, and much to her surprise finds him a delightful young man, and proceeds to fall in love with him. Although he believes her to be a dressmaker, the Emperor also falls in love with her, and announces his intention to balk his wilful mother, and break off the engagement with Helena. Of course, it all irons out smoothly when the Emperor learns the true identity of Cissy, and the way is clear for her to become his Empress.

As you can see, the plot is quite stereotyped, but there is so much genuine humour and comedy plus some beautiful melodies written by Fritz Kreisler and sung by Miss Moore, that one is inclined to forget the plot in the general entertainment of the picture.

Grace Moore does a splendid bit of work as Cissy, the tomboy princess; she has been cleverly made up to look much younger than in her other pictures, and her voice has never been better. Her comedy bits are new and refreshing, and a treat to watch.

Second honours go to Franchot Tone, seen as the Emperor. In spite of a peculiar wig that gives him a grotesque appearance at times, and in spite of his very un-Austrian accent, Tone gives a most satisfactory performance, and one that should meet the approval of his many fans.

Walter Connolly as the wood-chopping Duke supplies a great deal of the laughs. Connolly has been giving first rate performances ever since "It Happened One Night" — except for that lapse in "Rolling Along" — and is becoming one of the most popular supporting players on the screen.

And now for a confession. The biggest kick I got out of "The King Steps Out" was not handed me by Grace Moore, Franchot Tone or Walter Connolly; it was provided by the acting of Herman Bing, as the

innkeeper. The scene where Tone and Miss Moore endeavour to convince Bing that he is crazy, by telling him when he whistles, that he is not whistling, but that he just imagines it, is a riot. Without exaggerating, I can safely say that my sides ached from laughing at the antics of Herman, who, as Roly Young would put it, is a master at the art of the "slow-burn".

Others in the supporting cast include Victor Jory, Raymond Walburn, Elizabeth Risdon and Nana Bryant. Direction is by Joseph von Sternberg.

PERSONAL MUSINGS

HEARTY congratulations of this column and of the Editor go to Mr. Samuel Forgoston of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer on his recent marriage to Miss Ann Rogosa. May all your troubles be little ones, litter-ally speaking, that is.

ROLY YOUNG in his "rambling" in the Mail and Empire, the other day, takes a crack at our tender age, with "Jay L. apparently reads this column along with the rest of the comics in the Mail". We admit it, Roly, we'll read anything for a laugh.

Roly's alibi in regard to his story about Major Bowes' salary sounds plausible, although his reference to Jack Benny having to pay his wife out of his salary, is rather superfluous; after all, hasn't it always been "Papa Who Pays"?

Roly, however, neglects to reply to our question regarding the accuracy of his statement that Ronald Colman would play the title role in David Selznick's forthcoming production of "Julius Caesar". According to our reports (see Digest issue of June 13th, "Show Business") Colman will play the role of Brutus in the Selznick production.

Incidentally, we have a hankering to see that great English actor, Charles Laughton, as "the Caesar". In our humble estimation, Laughton would make a perfect Caesar, but perhaps some of our readers who know moving pictures, you too Roly, could think of someone who would be better qualified for the part. Let us hear your nominations.

ENCLOSED in a letter from my friend Walter Davis, manager of the Capitol Theatre, Regina, are a couple of items that may be of interest to exhibitors. First of all there is a booklet which is given to all patrons of the theatre as they leave the house. In this booklet, which is attractively printed in green on white — a cool looking combination — is the cast of the next two pictures playing at the theatre, and about a two or three line review on the pictures; e.g. for "Ex-Mrs. Bradford" — 'BLONDE TROUBLE FACES THE SCREEN'S MOST ATTRACTIVE DETECTIVE' — a descriptive and interest-awakening line if ever there was one.

Another little pamphlet contains ballyhoo for MGM's "Wife versus Secretary", and is called "Office Etiquette". Under three headings, Rules for a Perfect Boss, Rules for a Perfect Secretary, and Rules for a Perfect Wife, you will find such words of wisdom as "Your secretary isn't your wife. Always remember that when you feel impelled to invite her out for dinner", "Forget your curves while putting down your dots and dashes", and "Let your husband's business be his 'head' interest, while you always remain his 'heart' interest; and just so you

(Continued from page 7)

Gene Lockhart, Canadian Actor, Makes Big Hit in "Times Square Playboy" at the Eglinton

Reviews and Previews

(Continued from page 6)

won't forget where you got the booklet, under the heading Rules for a Perfect Boss, the last notation reads "Make it a practice to reward your secretary with little gifts for her workaday loyalty. Capitol Theatre gift tickets are always acceptable." Attaboy, Walter, that's Showmanship!

SPENT a few minutes with Roger Pryor, the film star who made a personal appearance at Shea's Hippodrome last week. Originally scheduled to appear here several weeks ago, he was delayed due to some slip-up in a picture which he was making for Republic. Even then he had to fly from California to Buffalo by TWA, and then charter a private plane from Buffalo to Toronto, in order to arrive here in time.

Pryor has been in Toronto several times previously in legitimate productions, notably in 1932 in "There's Always Juliet", which played at the Royal Alex.

Incidentally, Roger is the son of Arthur Pryor, internationally famous band leader, and it is Roger's intention to take out a band of his own for a few months this summer. An excellent pianist, Pryor will probably conduct the band from the key-board.

Asked which he preferred between the Stage and Screen, Roger quite frankly admitted "I believe I prefer the Stage, but it doesn't pay like the films do, and for that reason I guess I'll stick to the Screen". Money may not be everything, thinks Roger, but it sure helps.

I forgot to ask Roger his age, but I should hazard a guess of around thirty-two or thirty-three, and if I am libeling him he can sue me. He is taller than the average man, good-looking in a masculine way, and with a very well trained moustache, carefully clipped. He has a pleasantly cordial manner about him and one that sets you at your ease immediately. Like his father he is very interested in music, and don't be the least bit surprised if in a year or so you find everyone talking about what a swell orchestra that fellow Pryor has.

Among Pryor's many successes on the screen you may remember Universal's popular musical "Moonlight and Pretzels", "You May be Next" and many others.



H. M. WARNER GREET'S CANADIAN DELEGATES

Left to Right—L. Geller, J. Plottel, W. Cohen, H. O. Paynter, M. J. Isman, H. M. Warner, L. McKenzie, and A. Piggins.

AN orchid to Horace Lapp for the successful opening of his band at the Royal York Hotel Roof Gardens recently. As many of you will recall, Horace used to be at the Imperial Theatre, where he played the organ, and then later directed the band. Horace Lapp is a whiz at tickling the ivories, and he and his band are going over "big". He has several good vocalists among the "boys", and an unusually attractive girl, Madeleine Pedler by name, as the "love interest" vocalizer. Oh yes, she has a swell voice, too. As an added attraction Horace is presenting a dance team direct from the Radio City Music Hall, Rockefeller Center. Toronto is really going "big time" this summer, and Horace Lapp and his outfit are leading the parade in grand style.

HERE'S a story on your Editor which may amuse some of you. A few years back when Bolivia and Paraguay were at it hammer and tongs over the Gran Chaco, the war came under discussion at the dinner table. Your editor listened for some time to the conversation, and then suddenly broke in with, "Oh those Balkan countries are always causing trouble". As a geographer, ye Editor really knows the moving picture industry!

YOUR reviewer, in an effort to obtain an interview with Miss Colleen Moore, called up the Royal York the other day. The switch-board girl answered the phone and in a bored voice, "Royal York Hote-yull". Says your reviewer, "Colleen Moore's suite". "So what!", says the gal, "I'm sweet too, and what does it get me". Darn clever these Chinese!

Another remark that "got" me was one I heard on Yonge Street yesterday. A certain well-known chain of restaurants have removed the plate glass in their front windows, put in an awning and some flower boxes, and generally made their restaurant look very smart. I was passing one at the corner of Richmond and Yonge, and I stopped for a moment to admire the innovation. A young couple walked by and the girl, turning to her escort, remarked, "Say, isn't that smart?" "Nuts", says the blase boy friend, "the glass is broken." Good old Toronto.

SPENT a delightful two hours the other evening at the new Eglinton Theatre. Boy, was it a pleasure to relax in comfortable loge seats, light a cigarette, and puff luxuriously as I watched two really good pictures.

Canada should be very proud of the new Eglinton Theatre, for it is undoubtedly the finest and most luxurious house in the Dominion, and compares most favourably with such show-places of the States as the Fox-Phoenix and the best of the new London suburban houses.

The fittings, the draperies and the lighting system in the Eglinton, are the last word in modern interior decorating, while the theatre has as fine acoustics as any show palace I have ever been in.

And just a word about Bob Faves. Phil Stone has already interviewed Bob, but I would just like to add that your reviewer found him to be one swell fellow; a wide-awake, ambitious showman, with a pleasant manner about him, that is bound to make him friends wherever he may be.

W. C. Fields, Noted Comedian, Critically Ill

Conklin in Winnipeg



J. J. Conklin

THE reported heavier tax on motion picture films formed a part of the government campaign speeches in the recent by-election in Victoria, B.C., which was won by the Conservative candidate, Dr. Tolmie. The importance of sending a supporter of the Government to Ottawa in view of the fact that the tariff board would shortly consider the question of duties on motion picture

equipment was stressed by J. B. Clearihue in an address in the Rex Theatre, Esquimalt, B.C., in support of C. J. McDowell, Liberal candidate.

Mr. Clearihue pointed out that the establishment of the motion picture industry in Victoria was of paramount importance, and this could only be brought about by an abolition of the duties on motion picture equipment, or at least a substantial reduction.

The Central Films of Victoria had established here and produced four pictures, and would shortly start on two more. This had been made possible by a temporary arrangement brought into effect after the Liberal Government came into power, he declared. The Central Films had spent \$100,000 on its first four pictures, and this meant a lot to this city in employment and business.

"It is important that we send a representative to Ottawa who can look after our interests and see that things are made easier for the establishment of so important an industry. I know of two companies that are ready to locate here if the tariff is removed," Mr. Clearihue declared.

FRANK WILLIS, at the Winnipeg Metropolitan, holds the record. He has been in his present position, directing the destinies of the Met. for eight years . . . a record for Famous Players' managers in the West.

Larry Greyburn of the Winnipeg-Orpheum has gone to New York on a vacation. Until he returns Jack Purvis continues at the Capitol. Then Larry will move over to the Capitol and Jack will return to his former theatre in Sudbury.

It should be cool in Winnipeg theatres this summer. The Tivoli, Beacon and the Park have all installed new cooling systems, with conditioned air, artesian wells, ice cold water and other devices to add to summer comfort.

The moving picture, "The Great Ziegfeld", which was recently shown at the Winnipeg Orpheum Theatre, under a road show management, has been admitted to be the finest bit of screen entertainment ever seen in this city. It will not be shown in Winnipeg again until next autumn.

MRS. M. M. CUSSANS has been appointed an acting member of the Manitoba Motion Picture Censor Board during the absence of Mrs. Velance Patriarche, who has been granted leave of absence for some months. Mrs. Cussans took over her new duties June 6.

Meet the Exhibitor

by Phil Stone

MIX together one charming and personable gentleman . . . handsome in the Lewis Stone manner . . . six foot tall and silver-haired . . . yet with a carriage and clearness of skin befitting a twenty-year-old . . . and you have Roy Downey . . . manager of the St. Clair theatre . . . Mr. Downey is a Chicagoan . . . his first theatre experience was selling seats for the American Seating Company in Minneapolis . . . he came to Regina in 1912 to work in the office of the Canadian Film Exchange . . . he became secretary to the manager and later sold film . . . in 1914 the exchange was taken over by Carl Laemmle . . . and during '15, '16, and '17 he was manager of the Saskatchewan office . . . when this office closed, Universal began the Bluebird features . . . and Mr. Downey managed the Manitoba and Saskatchewan offices for six months . . . came then the time in every manager's life when he feels the urge to conquer the film world . . . briefly, he decides to buy and manage his own theatre . . . Mr. D. succumbed to the Urge . . . in Brandon, Man., he bought a theatre . . . "The Strand — The Theatre Beautiful" . . . "It broke my heart and my bankroll", Mr. Downey told us wistfully . . . foregoing his great aspirations he became assistant manager to H. L. Gage who was in charge of two Allan theatres in Regina . . . 1920 found him managing Allan's Capitol in Moose Jaw . . . in 1921 he came to Toronto as manager of the Beaver theatre . . . a year later he was transferred by the Allans to the St. Clair . . . he was there for eight years although Allans had been taken over by Famous Players during that period . . . in 1930 F. P. transferred him to the Belsize . . . he remained there till 1933 . . . and then was sent back to the St. Clair . . . and where now? . . . that rests upon the controlling hands of his superiors . . . but we feel sure . . . that no matter where Mr. Downey will park his toothbrush and managerial ability . . . that theatre would progress.

THE Royal George is a small Independent house on St. Clair avenue . . . it is at present managed by Rex Watkins and his mother Mrs. McCulloch . . . Mr. Mac one discovers is Rex's step-father and therein lies a tale . . . and with our reportorial Schnozzle alight, we seek . . . and we find . . . that ten years ago Rex began work with Regal Films as shipper . . . and he held the position for 5 years under the supervision of Win Brown . . . following that he went with the road-show of "Birth of a Nation" as checker . . . that lasted but a few months and then Mr. McCulloch took ill . . . that was 3 and a-half years ago . . . and he's been ill since . . . Rex took over the reins at that time . . . and together with his mother they are still running the theatre . . . as we saw Mrs. McCulloch busy at the box-office . . . and Rex busily engaged in managing things . . . it made us stop and ponder . . . we've heard many things about step-fathers . . . but young Rex belies them all . . . his ambitions for the Royal George . . . his anxiety to see it progress . . . his willingness to do more than his part . . . all speak well for Mr. Mac . . . Rex is a good-looking, dark young man of about 26 . . . his ideal in the theatre business is F. P.'s new theatre-beautiful the "Eglinton" . . . Rex hopes that some day he will build up the Royal George to an equal footing . . . he knows it will be a hard, arduous task . . . but sure as tomorrow, he'll try . . . and when some day we find the Royal George to be one of the city's leading houses . . . we'll say "I told you so".

Paramount Produced "Devil Is a Woman"; M-G-M Making "Devil Is a Sissy"; Our Money's on Leo to "Raise the Devil"

British Film Digest

*Special to The Digest, from our London Correspondent,
Dennison Thornton.*

PAINTING in Hollywood studios appears to have been a bit of a problem for Sir John Lavery, eminent British artist who recently returned here after a long sojourn under Californian skies. "Shooting schedules" were his biggest difficulty. Scenes he wanted to paint today were invariably postponed until tomorrow; and when tomorrow came and he arrived at the studio it was usually to find that the scenes had been "shot" during the night!

"Romeo and Juliet"

Despite these difficulties, however, Sir John managed to do a considerable amount of work. He spent long hours on the "Romeo and Juliet" sets at Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer. Norma Shearer, Maureen O'Sullivan, Loretta Young and Shirley Temple all sat for him. From the artist's standpoint his two favorites were Maureen O'Sullivan and Loretta Young. The former, he admits, thoroughly fascinated him not only by her looks but with her intelligence.

Shirley Temple struck him as being "an extraordinary child — desperately quick and bright and not in the least spoilt or self-conscious".

He describes Marlene Dietrich as "paintable", and Leslie Howard as "a charming chap, with a face worth painting".

But the thing that really impressed Sir John were the "Romeo and Juliet" settings. "They were elaborately, beautifully built regardless of expense," he says. He wanted badly to sketch the balcony scene but unfortunately this never materialized during his visit. He started to work on the tomb scene but the following day, when he arrived at the studios, he found it had vanished in the night. Nobody could tell him when it would be re-erected.

He was told to make enquiries of the finance committee, but even members of that body were unable to help him.

Incidentally Shirley Temple was one of the few in Hollywood who addressed him correctly as "Sir John". Most people called him "Sir Lavery", he says!

Rene Clair's Plans

THE eminent Rene Clair whose delightful "The Ghost Goes West", is regarded as the finest British comedy of the year, has been visiting his native Paris to ponder there his future directorial plans. As previously announced in The Digest, his next for London Films is to be an Edwardian satire, "A Bicycle Made for Two". Following that he will direct "The Blue Cloud" for the same company. This is the story of a man who is permitted to leave hell and return to earth for 24 hours. Charles Laughton will be the star. Without knowing more about the story than this it seems to me that it is thematically reminiscent of Molnar's "Liliom".

Samuel Goldwyn would also like Clair to direct the forthcoming "Goldwyn Follies" but between you and me, Ray Lewis, I don't think the M. Clair will accept the offer! It isn't quite his meat!

Charles R. Rogers, V.P. in Charge of Production, Announces 42 Features for Universal, 1936-1937

Adela St. Johns' Visit to British Studios

ADELA ROGERS ST. JOHNS, the well-known American film journalist, has been making a survey of British studios. She is writing her observations for "The Daily Express", and in her first article reveals it was Douglas Fairbanks, Jr.'s, enthusiasm for British production that made her curious to find out about things for herself.

Miss St. Johns has already visited the studios at Isleworth, Denham, Elstree and Shepherd's Bush. Her first surprise was when she found herself being conveyed to Isleworth by a Member of Parliament who, she declares, resembles Gary Cooper. The gentleman in question was Captain Cunningham Reid, one of the financial backers of Criterion Films. Miss Rogers observed that one difference between English and American producing firms is that in Hollywood "we do not have executives who are M.P.'s and who look like Gary Cooper."

The studios themselves made a big impression on her, the thing she liked most about them being their "intimacy". Hollywood, she said, is so vast that good ideas are frequently lost there. Here, in English studios, it is easier. A producer or director can sit down quietly in a congenial, "intimate" atmosphere and work out his ideas. The British film industry, she states, has "temperament", an invaluable quality which disappeared from Hollywood many years ago. The technical and mechanical equipment in English studios is equal to the very best and the very latest to be found in Hollywood, she adds.

She does not know whether Alexander Korda is a genius but suspects that he has genius in him.

In one article Miss St. Johns quotes Mr. Korda as follows: "Hollywood — it is too small. They have forgotten there is anything of importance except the producer. Of what is less importance than a producer? Only is he important if he makes good pictures.

"But in Hollywood he is important of himself. There is nothing there to give perspective. In London — it is the centre of the world. That is why it is better to make pictures in London."

Gielgud as Kean

JOHAN GIELGUD, who made his screen debut as the musician-hero of "The Good Companions" and who plays his second film role in "The Secret Agent", is being sought to portray the part of Edmund Kean, in a picture based on the life of the great actor to be made by Cine-Alliance, a new British independent concern. Gielgud, who is regarded here as the outstanding English Shakespearean actor of the present day, recently concluded a long engagement in "Romeo and Juliet" on the stage. His "Hamlet" was one of the biggest hits of the past season.

Lulu in Hollywood



Lulu S. Niemeyer

20TH CENTURY - FOX'S —
"ROAD TO GLORY", produced by Darryl Zanuck-Nunnally Johnson, Asso. Directed by Howard Hawks, with Frederic March, Warner Baxter, Lionel Barrymore, June Lang, Gregory Ratoff, Victor Kilian, Paul Stanton, John Qualen, Julius Tannen, Theodore Von Eltz, Paul Fix, Leonid Kinsky, Jacques Lory, Edythe Raymore, George

Warrington. A gloriously beautiful and unforgettable film of what war really is, — not why. How men, in the face of actual death, carry on with orders, not for days or months, but for years. Frederic March as the fascinating, gay but altogether competent lieutenant, — Warner Baxter as the captain, Lionel Barrymore as the Captain's father, who in his capacity as private, gives what I believe to be one of the finest performances of his life, — June Lang as the nurse, but the Captain's daughter as well is every bit the lovely French girl she depicts, — and all of them with their perfect support tell you the story of war in a gripping fascinating fashion. Truly the screen could do worse than take the poem written by your Editor, "The Cup of Civilization", and film it, to bring home in another great picture the misfortunes of war to all concerned. The picture "Road to Glory" does not tell you the whys or wherefores of war, — but simply portrays the actual facts of the every day life of the soldier in action.

M-G-M'S "WOMEN ARE TROUBLE". Directed by Errol Taggart with Stuart Erwin, Paul Kelly, Florence Rice, Margaret Irving, Cy Kendall, John Harrington, Harold Huber, Kitty McHugh, Raymond Hatton. This lands you right in the middle of a newspaper office with Kelly as the editor, whose tongue has a razor edge. Stuart as a reporter seems to work like a turtle, and is fairly well harrassed, but put "on his toes" by the usual girl, out to win her laurels. Florence is the girl and she gives him a run for his money. Of course, there is a gang of racketeers, and Florence lands right in the middle of it all, with Stuart to the rescue, — and of course he has his reward — the gal, — but is it a reward? I'll say so, the girl and the picture, both good and easy to take.

UNIVERSAL'S "PAROLE". Directed by Louis Friedlander with Henry Hunter, Ann Preston, Alan Dinehart, Noah Berry, Jr., Grant Mitchell, Alan Baxter, Bernadene Hays, Alan Hale, Berton Churchill, Charles Richman, John Milern, Zeffie Tilbury, Cliff Jones, Frank Mills, Anthony Quinn, Wallis Clark, Edward Keene, Douglas Wood, Christian Rub, John Kennedy, Frank McGlynn, Sr., Selmar Jackson. A vital subject in this country, beautifully handled in this film. Correcting the evils of a parole board in the hands of politicians. Demonstrated, not by a lot of ballyhoo, but by a safe and sane cure — and through the efforts of a boy on parole, Henry. Some lad. He has what it takes to withstand the racketeers, and through his efforts, and others like him, who are determined to go straight, the racket becomes non est. The romance is secondary in interest, — the story moving right along, and a credit to the new banner.



Norma Shearer and Edna May Oliver in M-G-M's production of "Romeo and Juliet".

UNIVERSAL'S "NOBODY'S FOOL". Directed by Arthur Greville Collins, with Edward Everett Horton, Glenda Farrell, Cesar Romero, Frank Conroy, Clay Clement, Warren Hymer, Henry Hunter, Florence Roberts, Ed Gargan, Diana Gibson, Pierre Watkin, Robert Middlemass, Ivan Miller, Marla Shelton, John King, George Irving — is a riot, with Edward all over the tenement houses, where he does all but die of Improvements. He gets in dutch as a supposed impersonator of a big shot realty man, — is saved by Glenda, only to be made a stooge for a deal Frank was going to put over on Cesar, the latter, who happens to be the ace gunman. Edward manages to skirt the edges, unknowingly coming out all O.K. with Glenda all for him. It's crazy, and we like it that way.

WARNERS - FIRST NATIONAL'S "WHITE ANGEL". Directed by William Dieterle, with Kay Francis, Ian Hunter, Donald Woods, Georgia Caine, Charles Croker-King, George Curzon, Billy Mauch, Egon Bfecher, C. Montague Shaw, Nigel Bruce, Nelson McDowell, Herbert Evans, Eily Malyon, Tempe Pigott, Halliwell Hobbes, Phoebe Foster, Ferdinand Munier, Henry O'Neill, Daisy Belmore, Charles Irwin, Harry Cording, Gardner James, George Kirby, Clyde Cook, E. E. Clive, Harry Stubbs, Henry Mowbray, Alma Lloyd, Jerry Larkin, Montague Love, Chas. Coleman, Leo McCabe. We believe the finest thing Kay Francis has ever done. As the genteel lady trying to better hospital conditions against all odds, — enlisting her services during the war, enduring all hardships and privations, — to gain her point. Such detail, only rivalled in the Pasteur picture, also one of Dieterle's. The brave women-nurses, headed by Kay Francis, begin with the miserable hospital at the front — their work in the trenches, the adoration of the men for these angels of mercy.

Very definitely one of the finest so far this year. This picture will not only entertain, but leave a memory of "service" by women in the time of greatest need, a service only women can render. We hope to see it again, and so will you. "White Angel" will bring glory and fame to Warner Bros. and Kay Francis.

AMPA's Awards to M-G-M, RKO, Paramount and Warners for "Best Ads"